

Remarks

This REPLY is in response to the Final Office Action mailed May 23, 2008. Applicant believes no additional fee is due with this communication.

I. Summary of Examiner's Rejections

Prior to the Office Action mailed May 23, 2008, Claims 1-18 and 20-22 were pending in the Application. In the Office Action, Claims 1 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Achacoso et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,161,149, hereafter Achacoso) in view of Balabanovic (U.S. Patent No. 6,624,826). Claims 2-10 and 12-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Achacoso in view of Balabanovic, and further in view of Ozzie et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,640,241, hereafter Ozzie).

II. Summary of Applicant's Amendment

The present Reply amends Claims 1 and 11, leaving for the Examiner's present consideration Claims 1-18 and 20-22. Reconsideration of the Application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

III. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

In the Office Action mailed May 23, 2008, Claims 1 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Achacoso (U.S. Patent No. 6,161,149) in view of Balabanovic (U.S. Patent No. 6,624,826).

Claim 1

Claim 1 has been amended by the current Reply to more clearly define the embodiment therein. As amended, Claim 1 defines:

1. *(Currently Amended) A collaboration system that supports conversations between business trading partners over multiple business protocols, comprising:
a central collaboration hub hosting a plurality of collaboration spaces and capable of automatically receiving and sending messages between business trading partners as part of a workflow conversation between the business trading partners, wherein each of the collaboration spaces provides an abstraction for use in communicating independently of business protocols used by the business trading partners;
a plurality of business protocol handlers that can be plugged into the collaboration*

hub, wherein each business protocol handler is configured to recognize a different electronic business-to-business protocol vocabulary chosen from the group of RosettaNet, XOCP, Biztalk, cXML or other electronic business-to-business protocols, and wherein each business protocol handler

decodes incoming messages from senders that use its particular business-to-business protocol vocabulary, into the abstraction used by the collaboration space, for subsequent routing within the collaboration hub, and

encodes outgoing messages from the abstraction used by the collaboration space into its particular business-to-business protocol vocabulary, for subsequent communication to recipients that use that particular business-to-business protocol vocabulary;

and wherein any one of the electronic business-to-business protocols is selected and used by a business trading partner to allow its business processes to send and receive messages to and from the collaboration hub using the particular electronic business-to-business protocol vocabulary and process flow that is used locally at that business trading partner;

wherein a workflow conversation is a collective set of said messages that comprises a workflow between the business-to-business processes operating at two or more business trading partners, and wherein each of said collaboration spaces stores the set of messages for one or more workflow conversations within a context, and wherein each unique combination of a particular collaboration space together with a particular electronic business-to-business protocol is associated with a unique uniform resource locator; and

a messaging protocol that allows each of the business trading partners to use their local electronic business-to-business protocol vocabulary to enable their business-to-business processes to participate in workflow conversations and to specify a routing information, wherein the electronic business-to-business protocol used by the business trading partner to communicate with a collaboration space is specified by the uniform resource locator that the business trading partner selects to communicate with that collaboration space, and wherein the routing information is then specified by the business-to-business process in a header of the messaging protocol.

Achacoso discloses a system and method for communicating information among members of a distributed discussion group having peripheral communication devices, and which includes communication between the peripheral communication devices and a central agent. As disclosed therein, the central agent receives and stores messages intended for at least one other group member, and creates a notice informing the at least one other group member that such a message exists and containing a channel (e.g., a hyperlink) directly to the memory location of the message.

(Abstract).

Balabanovic discloses a method and apparatus for generating visual representations for audio documents. (Abstract). As disclosed therein, a multimedia chronicle is a particular type of audio narrative that includes a singular narration thread and one or more references to various types of electronic documents. (Column 8, lines 16-23). Once a multimedia chronicle is created, user "A" may send the multimedia chronicle to another user via electronic mail. In one embodiment, in order to send the multimedia chronicle to another user, an XML representation of the multimedia chronicle is created. Once an XML representation of the multimedia chronicle is created, a unique URL pointing to the XML representation is subsequently emailed to another user, say user "B". (Column 9, line 16 - Column 10, line 3). Examples of linear documents may include a plain text document, a hypertext markup language (HTML) document, or some other markup language-based document including extensible markup language (XML) documents. (Column 7, lines 22-31).

In the Office Action mailed May 23, 2008, it was submitted that Achacoso teaches a collaboration system that supports conversations between business trading partners over multiple business protocols, a collaboration hub, and a workflow conversation between two or more business trading partners. It was further submitted that Balabanovic teaches a plurality of business protocol handlers, each of which are configured to recognize a different business protocol vocabulary chosen from the group of RosettaNet, XOCP, or other business protocols; and that the other electronic business protocols defined by the claims appeared to read on the use of XML as an "other business protocol".

Applicant respectfully traverses this comparison, and submits that while Achacoso and Balabanovic appears to describe the transfer of messages such as emails and documents, neither of these references appear to describe the use of a business protocol as this term is generally used. In particular, Applicant respectfully submits that, while Balabanovic appears to describe the use of XML to specify a message format, XML is itself a markup language rather than a protocol, (similar to the manner in which HTML specifies a markup language that is commonly used with the HTTP protocol). Some business protocols, or business-to-business protocols, such as RosettaNet and XOCP, may support the use of message payloads that comply with the XML specification for message format. However, Applicant respectfully submits that XML is not a business protocol or a business-to-business protocol as those terms are generally used.

To more clearly define this, Claim 1 has been amended to define that each business protocol handler is configured to recognize a different electronic business-to-business protocol

vocabulary chosen from the group of RosettaNet, XOCp, Biztalk, cXML or other electronic business-to-business protocols. Claim 1 has also been amended to more clearly define that each business protocol handler decodes incoming messages from senders that use its particular business-to-business protocol vocabulary, into the abstraction used by the collaboration space for subsequent routing within the collaboration hub; and encodes outgoing messages from the abstraction used by the collaboration space into its particular business-to-business protocol vocabulary for communication to recipients that use that particular business-to-business protocol vocabulary. Applicant respectfully submits that, neither Achacoso nor Balabanovic, when considered alone or in combination, appear to disclose or to render obvious these features.

In view of the above comments, Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 1, as currently amended, is neither anticipated by nor obvious in view of the cited references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

Claim 11

The comments provided above with respect to Claim 1 are hereby incorporated by reference. Claim 11 has been similarly amended by the current Reply to more clearly define the embodiment therein. For similar reasons as provided above with respect to Claim 1, Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 11, as amended, is likewise neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view of the cited references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-10, 12-18 and 20-22

Claims 2-10, 12-18 and 20-22 are not addressed separately but it is respectfully submitted that these claims are allowable as depending from an allowable independent claim, and further in view of the amendments to the independent claims and the comments provided above. Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 2-10, 12-18 and 20-22 are similarly neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view of the cited references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now pending in the subject patent application should be allowable, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested. The Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned if he can assist in any way in expediting issuance of a patent.

Applicant believes no additional fee is due with this communication. However, the

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Commissioner is authorized to charge any underpayment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 06-1325 for any matter in connection with this Reply, including any fee for extension of time, which may be required.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: July 23, 2008

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